

Our Public Lands

Fall 1980



The California Desert
Resolving Conflicts

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE
INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibility for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources."

The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

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Connie Babb, Editor

Gayle Daskalakis, Publication Designer

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The California Desert Plan

A Pacesetter for Future Management of Public Lands

James Ruch

In 1981, the Bureau of Land Management is launching one of the most unique multiple use programs ever attempted in the United States—implementation of a comprehensive land use plan for the California Desert.

As directed by Congress and two Administrations, the California Desert Plan will guide the long term use of desert resources, including minerals of national and international significance; it will provide many kinds of recreational opportunities and assure desert wilderness experiences for future generations of Americans.

The plan applies to a land area equivalent to the size of Ohio, covering 25 million acres. Included are 12.1 million acres of public land administered by BLM.

The area abounds in historic, scenic, archeological, biological, cultural, scientific, educational,

recreational and economic resources. There are a number of rare and endangered species of wildlife and plants, some of which are found only in the California Desert Conservation Area.

Conflicts between the uses of these resources have been boiling in the area for many years. This is most sharply portrayed by groups who advocate high levels of resources use and by those who





want extensive preservation.

Some areas have suffered considerable environmental damage during the last two decades. ORV's have broken desert pavement and accelerated erosion. Vandals have developed thriving black markets by blasting away and selling petroglyphs, which are images scraped on rock during prehistoric time. Unique desert vegetation has been stolen for illegal commercial ventures.

It is an extremely sensitive area where scars can remain a long time. For example, there still are ruts from wagon crossings more than a century old. Patton's tank tracks, made while training for World War II's North Africa campaign, also are visible.

There are vast areas of remarkable wilderness value in the desert. Forty-five sites totalling a little over two million acres are proposed for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. At the same time, much of the 15 million visitor use days of recreation in the area annually come from off-highway vehicle play. Ninety-five percent of the desert is within three miles of a road or way, making it one of the most accessible deserts in the world. And it is within easy driving time for 12 million people. Mineral resources have an estimated in-place value of between \$200 and \$600 billion. Cultural resource inventories indicate the presence of more than 100,000 prehistoric and historic sites.

There are conflicts on some lands between wildlife and livestock grazing. In other areas, conflicts arise from the proposed routing of electric transmission lines and water and fuel pipelines through areas of high scenic value.

Within the area are 100 communities with 500,000 people, eight county governments, numerous State and Federal agencies and 37 Indian reservations. The total planning area contains seven major military bases, 15,000 miles of paved and maintained roads, 11 power plants and 3,500 miles of transmission corridors.

The enormous increase in use and the deepening conflicts are

the forces behind developing a comprehensive long-range plan that would cover the entire desert area—private and public. In 1976 when Congress adopted the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), it also created the 25 million acre California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA).

The Act called for completion by 1980 of a comprehensive, long-range plan for management, use, development and protection of the public lands in the area, applying the concepts of multiple use and sustained yield.

Four years and \$8 million later, the Bureau has completed extensive resource inventories, an Environmental Impact Statement, and a plan for an area that stretches from Death Valley to Mexico and from the Colorado River to the Los Angeles Basin—one-fourth of California's total land area.

The Plan, approved by the Department of the Interior in December 1980, was developed under the full glare of public scrutiny and participation, often in cross-fire situations. Draft alternatives for the plan were presented early in 1980 for three months of public review and comment. The process included 12 public hearings. Public input was voluminous—40,000 separate comments from across the nation. Analysis of these comments was audited by a committee from the California League of Women Voters to assure impartiality and fairness.

Public comment identified many issues and caused changes in every major element of the plan. For example, on the wildlife issue, changes call for the expedited removal of 10,000 excess burros which threaten native wildlife values, and increased protection of bighorn sheep and the desert tortoise.

The Proposed Plan and Final EIS were released September 30, 1980, for a 50-day public review and comment period. Another series of 12 public hearings was held throughout California, and BLM received more than 3,000 responses. The final plan reflects an unprecedented amount of

public input and involvement in its preparation. A number of changes were made as the result of public input in the last comment period. Some of these are:

—The number of areas to receive special management as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) was raised from 73 to 75 with total acreage of 655,066.

—A key open area for off-road vehicles was added for a total of nine such areas, in addition to four major sand dunes and three major dry lakes, comprising 505,000 acres.

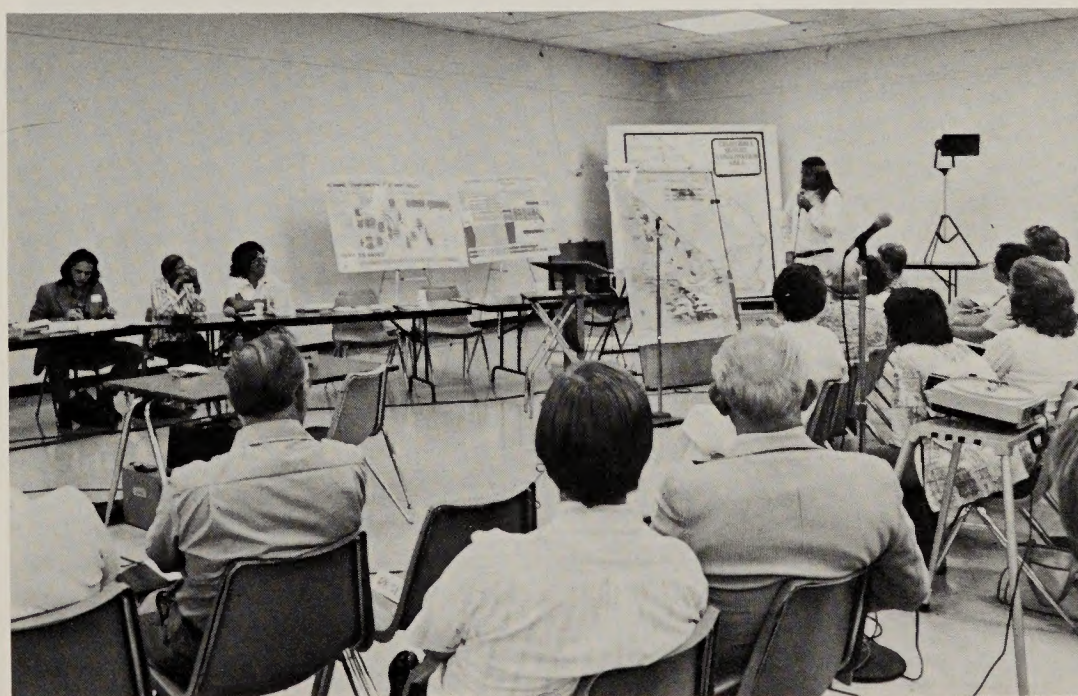
—The East Mojave Scenic Area was designated to recognize and provide management for one of the Desert's most scenic areas in response to public input.

—As a special response to the need to develop the important mineral resources of the desert, a change is being proposed to the Surface Mining Regulations that would streamline the requirements for mining operations in the "Moderate" and "Intensive" multiple-use classes. This would be especially helpful to the many small miners who commented on the Draft and Proposed Plans.

—The number of areas recommended as suitable for wilderness was increased from 43 to 45 with a total of 2,099,000 acres.

The California Desert Plan is one of the most far-reaching regional plans ever undertaken in the United States. It is designed to provide management guidelines well into the next century, yet contains flexibility for changes to meet unforeseen needs. It was prepared on the ground with the involvement of a broad spectrum of desert users; it strikes a remarkable balance between society's demands for resource goods and services and protection of unique and fragile public values.

Implementation of the Plan—at the recommended rate—will cost an estimated \$180 million during the first 10 years. That's less than \$1.50 per acre a year. The California Desert Conservation Area Advisory Committee, which has worked with BLM every step of the way in the development of this plan, has recommended that



BLM move promptly to implement the plan.

The Plan allocates the 12.1 million acres of public lands into geographical areas with varying kinds of intensive use. There are four such major designations called "Multiple Use Classes."

These classes and the amounts of acreage allocated to each are:

Class C (Controlled Use): 2,099,000 acres (17.3 per cent of the total). Lands in this classification are being primarily recommended as suitable for wilderness designation by Congress.

Class L (Limited Use): 5,883,000

acres (48.5 per cent). The purpose of this class is to protect sensitive natural, scenic, ecological and cultural resource values. These lands will be managed to provide generally for low intensity, carefully controlled multiple use, and development of resources, while ensuring that sensitive natural values are not diminished.

Class M (Moderate Use): 3,336,000 acres (27.5 per cent). This class is based on a controlled balance between full use and full preservation. Its purpose is to provide for a wide variety of present and future uses,

including mining, grazing, recreation, and energy and utility development. It is designed to conserve resources and mitigate damage to resources which permitted use may have caused.

Class I (Intensive Use): 499,000 acres (4.1 per cent). This class provides for concentrated use of lands and resources. Reasonable protection will be provided for sensitive natural and cultural values. Mitigation of impacts and rehabilitation of impacted areas will occur insofar as possible.

A total of 314,000 acres (or 2.6 per cent) are unclassified. These are isolated, scattered tracts which later may be sold, transferred to other ownerships, or exchanged. The tracts will be more closely examined before disposal actions are taken.

A major component of the Plan is defined as "elements"—the 12 major resources or issues of public concern, as identified in public review. These elements are: Cultural Resources, Native American Values, Wildlife, Vegetation, Wilderness, Wild Horses and Burros, Livestock Grazing, Recreation, Motorized Vehicle Access, Geology-Energy-Mineral Resources, Energy Production and Utility Corridors, and Land Tenure Adjustment.

For each element, the plan contains a statement of goals, management actions proposed, a program for implementation, and a system for monitoring impacts.

Implementation of a plan of this scope is a great challenge. There are no comparable land use plans from which to draw experience. Making the plans work in the face of conflicting demands and changing conditions will require creativity on the part of BLM and the public. But we start with a well-known fact: the concerns and the interests of the public have been recognized, and many of them have been molded into the plan. This, in itself, helps assure success as we begin making the plan an on-the-ground reality.



James B. Ruch is BLM California State Director.



The Margin of Life

A large part of the land administered by the Bureau of Land Management is arid or semiarid desert. Water is almost always the limiting factor in the use and enjoyment of these lands. Yet, even in the driest desert, water in some form may be available. Streams crossing the public lands total more than a quarter million miles and there are five million acres of lakes and reservoirs. Springs and seeps may provide moisture in arid areas.

Both Indian and settler understood the importance of these streams and lakes as a source of water, but the shorelines were further appreciated for the narrow strip of vegetation which could be found along the stream bank or shoreline—the area which we call “the riparian zone” or “riparian habitat.”

Paul Herndon

Riparian habitat may be defined as that narrow strip of vegetation along a water course or shoreline where the soil may be permeated by water during some part of the year. Because of the increased moisture some plants are present that would not be able to survive in the drier soils, while other plants, which are also present in the drier soils, are more vigorous. These plants provide shade and food that make the riparian habitat attractive and essential to a wide variety of animals, including man.

The Bureau is responsible for protection and management of about 500,000 acres of riparian habitat (excluding Alaska). For many plants and animals, this narrow margin, which may vary in width from a few feet to a few miles, is truly the “margin of life”. Without this habitat, animals solely dependent upon it would not be able to survive the harsh desert environment.

Although riparian habitat makes up only a small part of the total acreage of the public lands, it always receives a disproportionate amount of use when compared with surrounding areas. This habitat provides water, food and cover to both domestic and wild animals.

Riparian habitat also provides fishing and hunting areas and camping sites. Roads tend to fol-



*(Upper left) Leftovers of ancient riparian zones, TRONA PINNACLES, a BLM recreation area about 100 miles north-east of Los Angeles. The pinnacles are remains of algae that lived around springs in an ancient sea.
(Lower left) Vegetation grows in the riparian zone of this stretch of the Green River in Utah.*



low stream courses because road construction through the valley bottom is often easier and cheaper than crossing numerous side drainages. The action of some western streams in concentrating gold make them attractive sites for mining operations.

Because riparian zones are more heavily exploited than surrounding areas, over 90 percent of the historical riparian habitat has been destroyed, and the remainder is in a deteriorated condition. The same things—water,

food and cover that make the area so attractive to both man and animals contribute to their destruction. Damage is caused by livestock and wildlife overgrazing and trampling, which compact the soil and break down stream banks; road construction; placer mining, and recreational use.

Most plants are able to withstand the loss of some foliage during their growing season. Thus, a moderate amount of grazing by livestock or wild animals will not significantly interfere

with the continued growth and well-being of the plant. But overgrazing, by definition, goes beyond the removal of that amount of foliage which is within the tolerance range of the plant and when such heavy grazing continues, the plant loses a substantial amount of its vigor and may eventually die.

Anyone who has followed a footpath through the woods has seen how the passage of many feet will eventually wear away vegetation covering the ground, thus leaving a trail of hard-packed soil to mark the way. In the same way, the passage of so many sharp hooves can destroy vegetation, compact the soil within the riparian zone, and destroy the stream banks.

Human use also contributes to the deterioration of riparian zones. In addition to seeking out riparian areas because of the food, shade and water they offered, many settlers depended on these areas for wood and timber. Today riparian zones provide sand and gravel needed for construction far beyond the immediate area, and they are popular for the recreation they offer.

We still do not know as much as we would like to know about the ecology of riparian zones. The ecology of any area is always complicated and may not be fully understood even after years of careful research. The interlocking role of hundreds, if not thousands, of species of plants and

Because of the water, plants flourish along these streams that would not be able to survive in drier soils characteristic of adjacent areas.



animals may be compared to a spider's web where each strand exerts an influence on the total function of the web.

Understanding the ecology of riparian zones is complicated even further by the fact that no two areas are exactly alike, and different segments of the same stream may host totally different plant communities.

Certain things, however, seem to be consistent. The water which is readily available to plants causes a profusion of plant life that tends to modify the extremes of hot and cold characteristic of more open spaces. Plants tend to stabilize the soil, holding it in place with their network of roots and protecting it with their foliage from rain and wind.

As the water makes possible the growth of plants, the plants in turn exert an influence on the water.

The influence is particularly pronounced on streams. The shade of the trees and shrubs along the bank keeps the temperature of the water lower in summer. For example, 61 degrees F. was the highest temperature ever recorded for the water in Needles Branch of the Alsea River in Oregon until all of the streamside vegetation was removed as the area was logged. In succeeding summers, the water temperature reached 85 degrees. This was gradually lowered, however, as new vegetation became established.



Water temperatures are critical to fish life—especially for trout. In the West this becomes a major concern for land managers since trout are easily the fish most popular with anglers.

The effect of water temperatures on fish is one of the more dramatic evidences of habitat deterioration, because fish are important to people. But the damage done to fish is also done to many species of plant and animal life that make up the biota of the stream.

As streamside vegetation is destroyed, the total character of the stream changes. Banks cave in and fall into the water, the nature of the bottom may change from gravel to mud, the channel of the stream tends to straighten out and the stream becomes wider. This decreases the depth of the water. The increase in the sediment load, like temperature, has an adverse effect on trout. Sediment fills the spaces between the gravel on the bottom where trout eggs are normally incubated.

Studies show that the mortality of trout embryo may exceed 75 percent when the sediment load reaches 200 parts per million.

Although the destruction of riparian vegetation has a more dramatic impact on small streams, it also impacts larger streams, lakes and reservoirs. Lakeside vegetation may provide food and cover for a variety of wildlife. This would include nesting cover for waterfowl and other birds.

When livestock is allowed to wade into the water to drink, it affects not only the quality of the water but destroys aquatic communities that use shallow areas for feeding and for reproduction.

The Bureau considers the protection of riparian habitats a vital part of the total management program for the public lands. Riparian management must fit into the Bureau's multiple-use mission for the public lands. Multiple use means that all users must be accommodated as far as possible. But the Bureau also has a responsibility to protect the resource, and the antidote to over-use is less use. Where it becomes necessary to maintain the integrity of the resource, the Bureau may have to prohibit some uses altogether.

October 1, 1979, the Bureau published and sent to the field manual guidelines pertaining to the management of wetlands and riparian areas. The purpose of the guidelines was to set forth the Bureau's basic policy and procedures for the protection and enhancement of riparian zones and wetlands and to point out ways that field managers can meet the policy objectives.

The guidelines require district managers to inventory and map all wetland-riparian areas within their area of jurisdiction. Riparian data collected during the inventory will be analyzed and evaluated through the Bureau's land planning system. Through planning and environmental assessment, the impact of Bureau actions on riparian zones will then be identified.

Stated in the simplest terms, the guidelines require district and area managers to prevent harmful

uses of riparian zones as much as possible. When damage cannot be entirely prevented, the district manager takes whatever measures necessary to minimize damage and makes every effort to restore areas to their full productive capacity as soon as the cause of damage is removed.

For example, let us suppose that a district manager receives an application for a road right-of-way paralleling a stream and where the right-of-way is largely or totally within the riparian zone of that stream. Under the guidelines, the manager will first see if the applicant can be accommodated by relocating the road—moving it back from the stream and out of the riparian zone. If the alternate route proves to be impossible or impractical, he may next try to incorporate stipulations into the right-of-way agreement to ensure that the road will be designed and constructed in a way that causes the least possible disturbance to riparian vegetation, and the least possible damage from sedimentation and other adverse impacts.

Where streams flow through woodlands, the guidelines suggest that managers establish buffer strips to prevent trees near the banks from being cut or eroded. The shade and cover provided by the buffer strip will help maintain the temperature and quality of the water and prevent excessive sedimentation and channel erosion. Where buffer strips cannot be maintained, the manager can make mitigating stipulations a part of future timber sale contracts. Such stipulations can require the timber operator to remove branches, residue and other obstructions from the stream, prohibit logs from being skidded across or down stream channels, and require heavy equipment to cross the stream at designated locations.

Other suggested management practices contained in the guidelines include:

- Moving mining operations away from streams and riparian areas
- Dropping fire retardants parallel to rather than across

streams and riparian areas

- Constructing fire lanes to minimize erosion and siltation within the riparian area
- Confining recreation areas to specific segments of the riparian zone and designing such areas to have the least possible impact on the area
- Using fencing to protect areas that are especially sensitive to the encroachment of livestock and wildlife
- Designing culverts and drainage ditches so they will have the least possible impact on existing drainage patterns and to prevent blockage of migrating aquatic animals
- Installing riprap fills around culverts and other structures to prevent erosion
- Preventing interference with the natural channel of the stream as much as possible

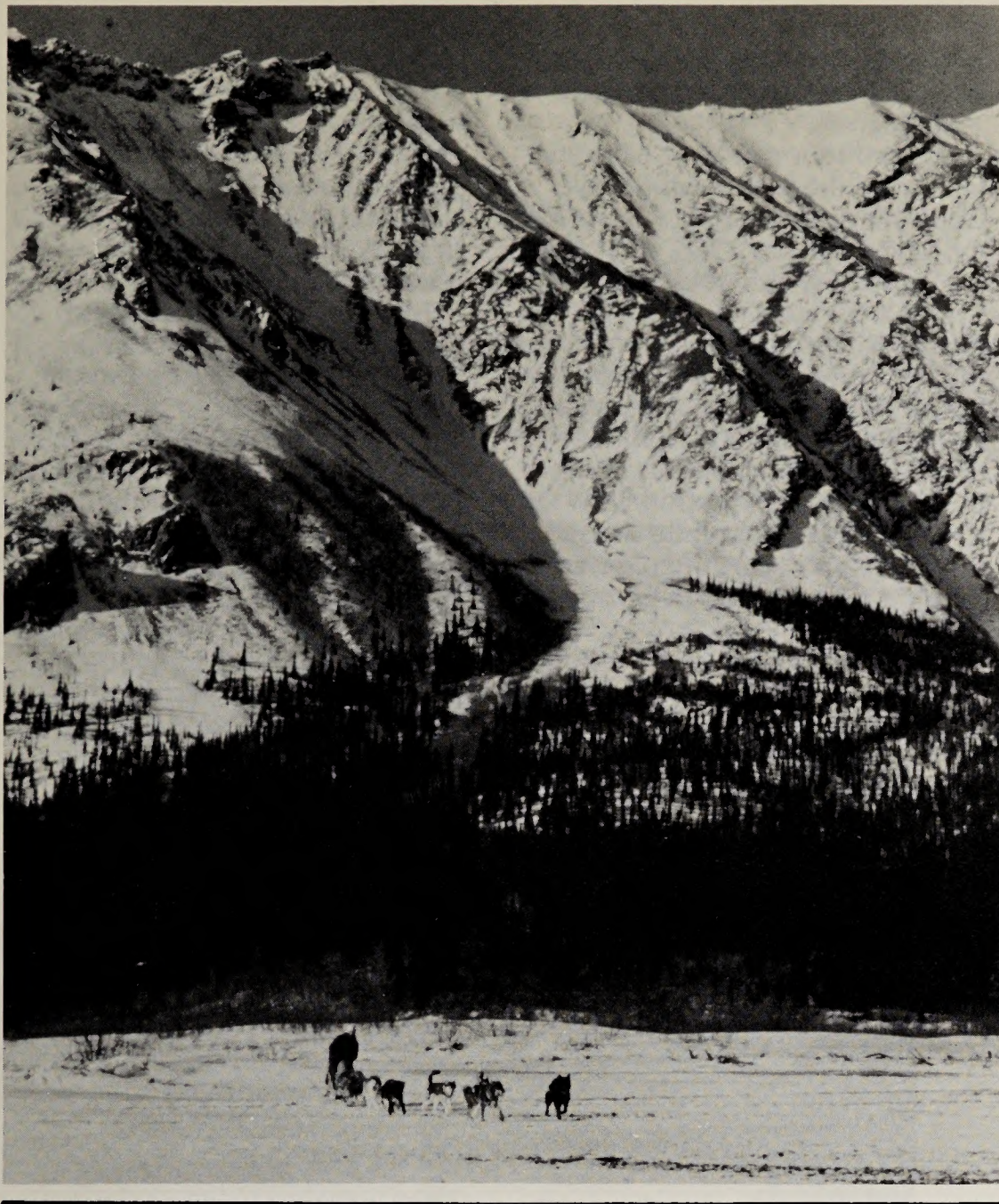
The guidelines encourage managers to protect riparian areas through the use of withdrawals, designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and through the development of wildlife habitat management plans.

In reaching decisions about the management and protection of riparian zones, district managers keep the following criteria in mind:

- Mitigating measures are to be both possible and practical.
- They are to be consistent with the Bureau's planning system and with those of State and local governments.
- They should not cause additional adverse impacts on the riparian habitat.
- They should have the support of Bureau officials and other Federal agencies, and they should be enforceable.

All decisions on the protection and management of riparian areas will be made only after full public participation.

Paul Herndon is a Public Information Specialist in the Office of Public Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Washington, D. C.



The Historic Iditarod

A Silent Possession of America's Vast Heritage

Joette Storm

Almost 100 years ago, when the first wave of gold seekers was pushing into Alaska's interior, trails were blazed through the thick spruce forests and hummocky tundra. Soon the trails were connected and extended as adventure seekers and entrepreneurs came north. What developed was a 1,600-mile trail system spanning Alaska from Seward to Nome, that would come to be known as

the Iditarod.

From gold rush trail to mail route to modern-day dogsled race trail, the Iditarod has had far-reaching effects on broad patterns of American culture for three-quarters of a century. In the 18th century the trails were used by Russian explorers, trappers and native Alaskans whose history was unrecorded. In 1978, Congress recognized the Iditarod as part of the national heritage

and designated it as a National Historic Trail in the National Trails System.

With the elevation of the trail to national status came responsibility for the Bureau of Land Management which included the development of a management plan for the trail, the compilation of its history, and an inventory of all sites and structures located adjacent to the Trail. This task is being accomplished by a special

project team in BLM's Anchorage District Office. The team is locating the original trail on the ground, researching old cabins and roadhouses, compiling an oral history and preparing a comprehensive management plan for the State, Federal, native and local land managers to use in the management of this historic route. The management plan includes standards for trail marking and maintenance as well as restoration and stabilization plans for the roadhouses which remain along the trail.

While much is known about the trail, there is still a lot of mystery surrounding it. The southern portion of the trail was first developed in the late 1880's. Gold strikes on Alaska's Kenai Peninsula brought itinerant miners aboard steamships and schooners to Valdez and Whittier where they would embark upon dangerous journeys across mountain passes. In 1903 the Alaska Northern Railroad was constructed at an ice-free port named for William Seward, the Secretary of the Interior who purchased Alaska. Seward became the funnel through which thousands entered Alaska.

During the same period, at the northern end of the route, the goldbearing sands of Nome beach drew thousands of people. In 1898, news of a strike at Anvil Creek, near Nome, sent miners from the Canadian Klondike down the Yukon River to Kaltag and around Norton Sound. Nome quickly grew into Alaska's richest mining district with a population of 12,488 by 1900.

As traffic on the trails increased, the Alaska Road Commission decided to survey the trail and provide a direct route between the two cities. In 1908 a survey party led by W.L. Goodwin began placing tripods and cutting trail along the route to mark the way.

Almost as fast as the trail was surveyed, enterprising young men and women began staking out sites for roadhouses along the way. Spaced about a day's journey apart, these inns were important to the gold seekers for they meant a warm fire, shelter and a

hot meal after a day on the trail when temperatures could reach -50 degrees.

Iditarod's turn to attract the attention of the world came while Goodwin was still about his work. On Christmas Day 1908, two prospectors struck gold on Otter Creek, a tributary of the Iditarod River. The formation of the Iditarod mining district followed with the influx of people. It was a rich district with four towns and 2,500 people working in the mines or in support services. In one short decade almost three million dollars in gold was brought out over the trail named for the district.

Mail and supplies continued to be transported by dogsled during the next few decades. In 1925 the trail's significance as a life line for the interior communities was em-

phasized when the town of Nome was threatened by a diphtheria epidemic. A relay of 20 dog mushers and their teams rushed precious serum 674 miles from Nenana to Nome in a record 127 hours during the cruelest of winter conditions.

That was the trail's last great moment, for air transportation would supplant the dog team in the coming years.

Much of the trail fell into disuse. Over time, dense vegetation of the tundra reclaimed the route. Goodwin's survey was lost, but no one seemed to care.

The Iditarod's future took a turn upward in the 1960's when a local dog musher named Joe Redington began organizing a race to commemorate the serum run. Redington researched the trail's location and formed a

Many factors contributed to the development of the Iditarod; depicted are a few.



group of "trail blazers" to relocate it on the ground.

It was Redington's effort that brought the trail to the attention of U.S. Senator Mike Gravel. Gravel saw to it that the Iditarod was included in a Federal study of gold rush trails being conducted by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation.

That study paved the way for the Iditarod to be named to the National Trails System and for the creation of the BLM project team.

The project team's job is to come up with a plan for identifying and protecting the historic route. It is a task made difficult by the fact that more than 70 percent of the land on which the trail is located is State or privately owned and subject to the pressures of a growing society.

The job requires a lot of coor-

dination. Much time is spent consulting with other agencies and interest groups and with the formation of an advisory council.

The work received a big boost early in the project when the staff was joined by Patty Friend, an Iditarod racer who participated in the 1978 dog sled race. Friend made contacts with the dog mushers' association, the native villagers and others interested in the fate of the trail, and explained to them what the planning process would mean for the trail.

"Some folks, such as the miners, were concerned that national trail status would mean a loss of access to their claims," Friend said.

Where the trail crosses lands destined for ownership by Alaska's natives, easements were reserved for public use, but on

lands owned by the State, or where the location of the trail is unknown, the matter of preservation is not as certain. Terry O'Sullivan, another project member, has been working with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources to insure the historic trail is identified so that the State has the information necessary to reserve adequate corridors before the land is disposed of for homesteads and other private uses.

Three seasonal employees are collecting an oral history, locating historic sites and trail segments and attempting to determine the significance of the sites through research. One of these employees, Steve Peterson, who served as exhibit specialist on BLM's restoration of Fort Egbert at Eagle, Alaska, has covered hundreds of miles of trail locating the remains of roadhouses and cabins. He is preparing restoration and stabilization recommendations for the sites.

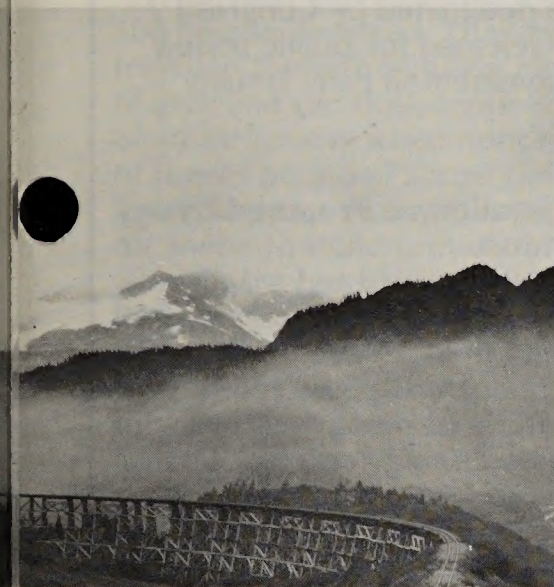
Researching the significance of the sites has proven a challenge for the project team since not much of the Iditarod's history is written. Staff member Tom Beck is gathering an oral history of the trail, visiting villages and settlements along the route.

There are still a few early pioneers alive who can recall firsthand knowledge of the trail. But their numbers are diminishing. Many have died and others have left Alaska to retire in more moderate climates.

Beck is even traveling to Canada for a meeting of the Alaska Yukon Pioneers to record the conversations of some of its members.

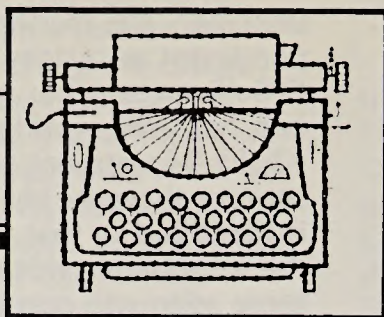
"Those we have located are wonderful sources of knowledge and they contribute greatly to the tradition we have been able to assemble about the life on the trail during a very exciting time in the development of Alaska and the United States," said Beck.

Joette Storm is a Public Information Officer in the Bureau of Land Management's District Office in Anchorage, Alaska.



A variety of interesting scenery and historical sites will greet the traveler along the Iditarod.





News Highlights

Special Energy Projects

Two agencies in the Department of the Interior are cooperating in efforts to harness the power of the winds to help ease the Nation out of its energy difficulties. The Bureau of Land Management is studying a proposal by a privately financed firm, Windfarms, Ltd., of San Francisco, to build a windmill energy system in Southern California. The Bureau, which manages the lands involved, has begun environmental studies on the proposal which hopes to supply local utilities with up to 320 megawatts of electrical power, equivalent to the energy available from one million barrels of oil.

The Water and Power Resources Service (formerly the Bureau of Reclamation), is conducting a feasibility study, involving the integration of wind-power, with the Colorado River Storage Project hydroelectric system at Medicine Bow, Wyoming. Hamilton Standard Company of Connecticut is constructing a four megawatt generator for the Service which will produce electricity that would be sufficient to meet the needs of about 1,200 families.

The Alaska Lands Measure

Nine years of bitter struggle over how to use the vast Federal lands in Alaska have ended. The historic Alaska land legislation was finally accepted by the House of Representatives and signed by the President on Dec. 2. The measure places more than 104 million Federally-owned acres under various forms of permanent protection, chiefly in national parks and national wildlife refuges. These lands may eventually rank with Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks as precious natural heritage.

Oil Shale Task Force Plan Approved

A plan intended to lead to expansion of oil shale leasing on Federal lands in the West was approved in June 1980 by the Interior Department. The plan creates an oil shale task force within the Department and sets forth work schedules in order to add to leasing of new tracts under the Interior's Prototype Oil Shale Leasing Program. In the meantime, Interior announced the results of its request for parties interested in oil shale leasing on Federal lands to suggest technologies they feel have the greatest promise for development for oil shale.

Wilderness Study

150 million acres of public lands have been released from further wilderness review as the result of on-going studies by the Bureau of Land Management. Nearly 24 million acres of public lands administered by BLM have been designated as wilderness study areas following the Bureau's two-year inventory process in the Western states. The inventory examined 174 million acres of public lands predominantly in the West, excluding Alaska, to determine if wilderness characteristics were present as defined by the 1964 Wilderness Act. Public lands identified for wilderness studies must be managed in a manner that does not impair wilderness

suitability, except with respect to existing mineral and grazing uses, which are allowed to continue in the same manner and degree. Valid existing rights are also recognized. Standard wilderness study procedures are being developed and were released in draft form in mid-December. The public will have until early March 1981 to review and comment on the study procedures. In addition, draft policies and procedures governing management of BLM-administered wilderness areas (once designated by Congress) were released for public review and comment in early January 1981.

Cooperation on Proposed Energy Corridors

The Bureau of Land Management, Agriculture's Forest Service, and the Western Interstate Energy Board have agreed to cooperate in planning and review of proposed energy corridors. Initial focus will be on proposed corridors for energy transmission systems—such as high voltage transmission lines, major telephone transmission systems, and pipelines—crossing public lands administered by BLM and Forest Service. Immediate attention will be devoted to needs developed cooperatively by the Western Utilities Group and the Western Systems Coordinating Council, an association of large-scale electric energy suppliers.

BLM management issued the first right-of-way grant to Pacific Gas Transmission Co. to prebuild 160 miles stretching from Eastport, Idaho, to Stanfield, Oregon.

When completed in 1985, the pipeline will provide two billion cubic feet of gas per day to the Nation, or the equivalent of five percent of the country's total natural gas demand.

Echoes from a Hoof-Hammered Land

by Evaline A. Olson

The historic and now silent townsite of Carpenter in northeast Colorado came alive briefly on a bright November day in 1980 for the dedication of the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

From near and far more than 100 people gathered. They had travelled through blinding clouds of grey and red dust, reminiscent of an earlier day when hundreds of horses pounded across these hoof-hammered canyons and scenic mesas to stand proudly in the wind and survey their domain. Reflecting the changing West, wild horse lovers came in blue jeans and cowboy boots, business suits and classic oxfords to honor the preservation of a unique wild horse herd and to salute one woman whose tireless efforts culminated in national legislation for the protection of all wild and free-roaming horses and burros in national forests and on public lands.

The woman honored was the late Velma B. Johnston, a diminutive executive secretary from Reno, Nevada. Mrs. Johnston's 27-year dedication as an equine protectionist began in 1950 and earned for her the name "Wild Horse Annie". (See accompanying story.) The Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range is dedicated to the memory of Wild Horse Annie, whose crusade has kept wild horses and burros a part of America's living heritage.

From 1950 to 1977 Johnston

crusaded for Federal protection of wild horses and burros on public rangelands in the West. Her work drew millions of young people to a better understanding of conservation and government. The Little Book Cliffs wild horses, one of her favorite herds, will live as an appropriate tribute to "Wild Horse Annie".

Some say the wild horses, their history entwined with the taming

of the West, are descendants of the mounts that carried the Spanish Conquistadores into Colorado in their search for the Seven Cities of Cibola.

Since 1968, three years before the passage of Public Law 92-195, commonly known as the Wild, Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act, on December 15, 1971, the splendid Little Book Cliffs herd figured prominently in the land



"It is both fitting and delightful to dedicate to 'Wild Horse Annie' an area where proper management of wild horses is the primary goal. . . .", said George Lea, Deputy Director, Lands and Resources.

management plan of the Grand Junction District Office of BLM. Among the management complexities were domestic livestock, deer and other wildlife. All depended on the resources of the sparse vegetation of the 27,000-acre Little Book Cliffs area. Also, looming on the horizon, resources for the energy

needs of America were seen in the valuable Little Book Cliffs area. These factors called for innovative and creative multiple-use management.

Working as good neighbors, in the spring of 1974 ranchers and BLM land managers arrived at an agreement that settled wild horse and domestic livestock conflicts.

The plan allowed wild horses to use the resources of a selected fenced area while the domestic livestock used another.

Under a specific management plan, vegetation and horse numbers have since been monitored by BLM range, watershed, and wildlife specialists. In 1971, the now-designated range held some

Wild Horse Annie

by Alan Kania

In 1974, Velma B. Johnston, then 65 years old, nimbly jumped out of a four-wheel-drive Scout in the Book Cliff Wild Horse area north of Grand Junction. A heat-struck admirer asked, "Velma, what keeps you going?"

She boldly looked him square in the eye and answered, "A tight girdle and a case of hairspray!" The 98-pound secretary could carry the weight of her avocation despite her diminutive stature.

Johnston, who died in 1977, was better known as "Wild Horse Annie" to millions of wild horse and burro proponents. From 1950 until her death, she earned her reputation and nick-name as a western conservationist and wild equine protectionist. Her 27-year campaign began unexpectedly one morning in Nevada.

In 1950, Johnston was on her way to work. Just ahead of her, a truck pulled into traffic—blood was dripping from its tailgate. She later learned that a colt, gathered in a wild horse roundup, was



Annie's allergy was her secret.

being shipped to a food processing plant. The foal had fallen in the truck and was being trampled by the adult horses.

That day, Velma B. Johnston launched a national campaign to federally protect the animals. She had little money to spend on lavish public relations blitzes. Instead, she used nearly every cent of the salary she earned as an executive secretary for a Reno insurance broker.

Twice, Annie's convictions brought her to Washington, D.C., where she was responsible for the passage of two federal laws that still protect the wild horses and burros that roam the western public lands. Twice, Annie spent time personally visiting the Book Cliff wild horses.

This winter, Colorado will acknowledge Velma B. "Wild Horse Annie" Johnston's contributions to the State. Over 10 cases of her personal papers have been catalogued and made available to students and journalists using the Denver Public Library's Conservation Library. Included in the collection are personal documents pertaining to some of Annie's most controversial campaigns.

Annie's home-base organization, the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros, has succeeded in making another of her dreams a reality. ISPMB and the Bureau of Land Management/Department of the Interior co-sponsored the November establishment of the "Little Book Cliff Wild Horse Range, dedicated to the memory of Velma B. 'Wild Horse Annie' Johnston." The 27,000-acre semi-private range north of Grand Junction hosts 75-100 horses.

Wild Horse Annie's contributions to Colorado and western heritage are awe-inspiring. But for all the contributions and dedication that Annie made on behalf of the wild horses, she was often in great discomfort around the wild equines—you see, Wild Horse Annie was allergic to horses.

Alan Kania is a freelance writer and a member of the Board of Directors of the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros.



Progeny of the wild bunch, "Hot Cocoa", is admired by dedication visitor. The colt, held by Linda Jordan, was sired by quarter horse, out of grey mare in background. Chris Van-DenBerg, Grand Junction, adopted the mare, Ginger, through BLM's Adopt-a-Horse program.



Several Grand Junction area wild horse adopters brought their sleek animals to the dedication.

50 horses. By 1977 the population had jumped by nearly 80, to over 120 animals. In November of that year, following extensive public involvement, BLM rounded up 50 horses, removed 40 and returned 10 of the better horses to assure herd improvement. All 40 horses removed from the Little Book Cliffs area were adopted under

the Bureau's Adopt-a-Horse Program by people who appreciate this unique animal. It is now estimated that the herd is increasing at an approximate rate of 15 percent annually.

The Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range is the first area to be dedicated since passage of the Wild Horse Act in 1971. It is the

third area that the Bureau has set aside for the primary use, maintenance and protection of a wild horse herd. The other two are the Nevada Wild Horse Range being managed in conjunction with Nellis Air Force Base and the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range on the border of Montana and Wyoming.

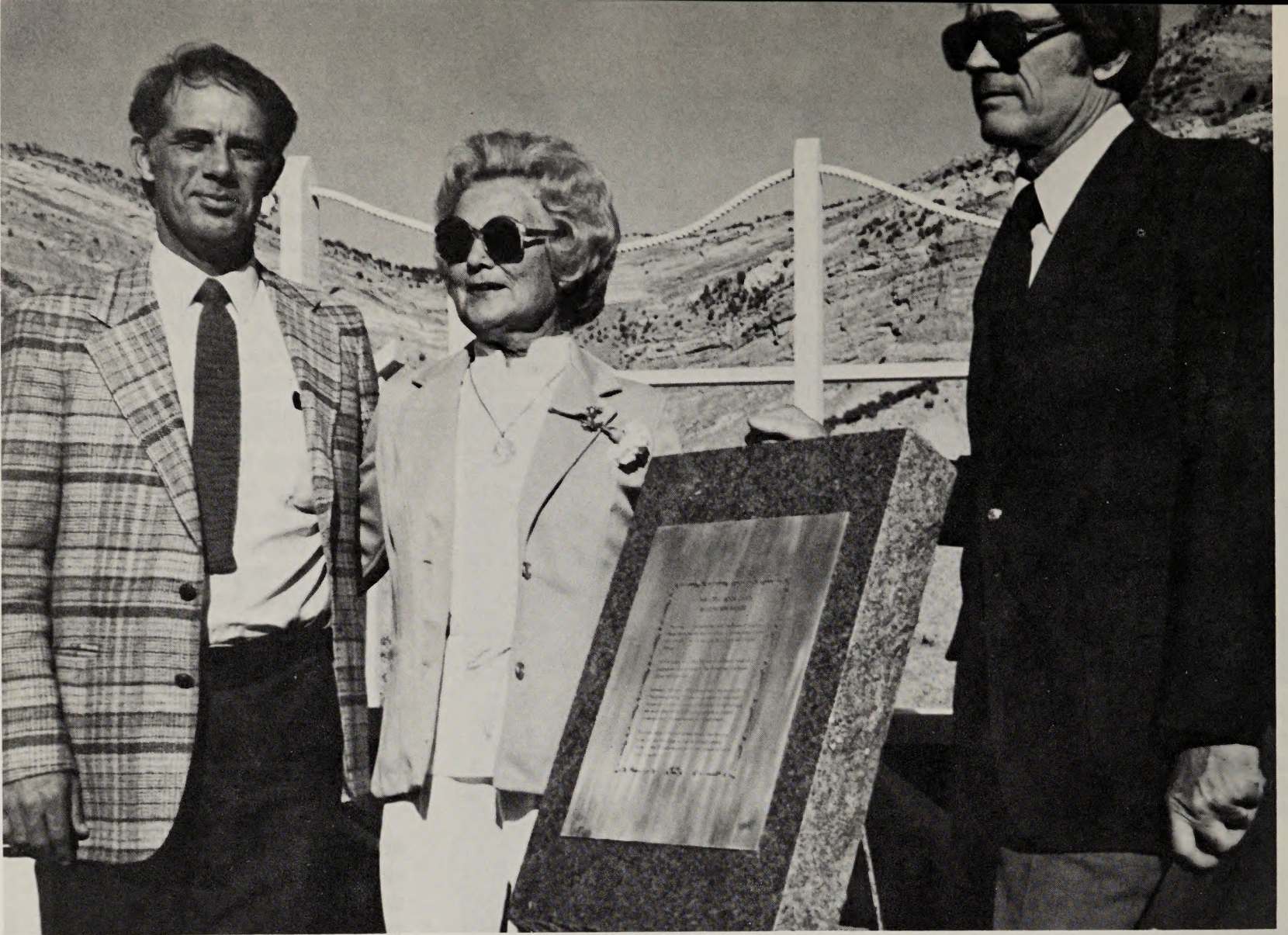
The Nevada Range consists of nearly 400,000 acres of desert and rolling hills. There are approximately 1,000 horses in the area.

The Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range covers some 43,000 acres of public land. The rugged topography maintains a herd of 125 to 140 horses, a level compatible with their habitat. Round-ups are usually held every other year to keep the herd in balance with the food supply. Most of the horses removed from the area have been adopted under the Adopt-a-Horse Program.

The excess animals are captured and removed by different methods, depending on the terrain, water supply, and suitability of trapping sites. Once the animals are inspected and located in corrals with ample food and water, the job of matching up the horse and Adopt-A-Horse applicant begins. Based on information obtained from applicants, "foster parents" are selected. Successful applicants, for the most part, have been delighted with their horses.

Attending the pomp and ceremony of the dedication of Little Book Cliffs were former "residents" of the area—once wild horses that came with their new "foster parents". Now sleekly groomed and gentled, the former wild horses stood quietly by as "Wild Horse Annie" was lauded for her keen sensitivity to the delicate balance between preserving the wild horses and preserving the capability of the land to support them.

"She knew too few horses were an abuse of our national heritage, and that too many horses would be an abuse of the land. This relationship between herd size and grazing capacity is the basis of proper management of wild horses and burros," said George Lea, BLM Deputy Director for



Plaque honoring memory of "Wild Horse Annie" is displayed by C.W. "Bill" Luscher (l), BLM Colorado Acting State Director, Helen A. Reilly, who unveiled the plaque, and George Lea, BLM Deputy Director. Plaque will be placed in the heart of the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range.

Lands and Resources.

Local ranchers, who selflessly contributed to the development of the range, were presented with individual certificates which stated, "As a member of the ranching community, you have typified a 'Good Neighbor' to the Bureau of Land Management in its multiple-use management of public lands. You have given complete cooperation by relinquishing a substantial portion of your grazing allotment to create a contiguous vegetative area for the more effective management of the unique wild horse herd of the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range."

Alan Kania, Denver author and board member of the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros, is coordinating and editing the papers of Mrs. Johnston for the conservation wing of the Denver Public Library. "Her papers," Kania said, "have been a great inspiration to me. They will be open to the public the first of the year for

anybody who wants to learn more of the wild horse and burro movement."

The dedication of the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range was the climax of an historic day. It was a testimonial to the love of the people for this colorful remnant of our Western heritage and a powerful argument in behalf of efforts to have permanent ranges designated where the horses can be protected and controlled.

Now that it is formally designated, the Wild Horse Range will continue to be recognized as a multiple-resource area. It is now being used for public recreation, oil and gas exploration and production, and livestock grazing. Watershed and other resource values will continue to be protected.

The Bureau is exploring the potential for additional ranges. Over the long term, the concept of ranges or sanctuaries may prove to be an important element in the preservation of wild horses and burros as a valued part of the

natural western environment and its history. This is particularly so if the encroachment of human activity continues to expand into remote areas which now provide habitat for horses, burros, and other forms of wildlife.

In terms of protection, management, and public education, the ranges could offer distinct advantages not possible when horses or burros are widely dispersed over millions of acres of intermingled Federal, State, and privately owned lands. Management of wild horses and burros would be the principal resource use in the established range. Other uses would also be protected and managed, but consistent with the management and protection granted to horses or burros.

Evaline Olson is a Public Information Specialist in the Bureau of Land Management's Colorado State Office in Denver.

George Caleb Bingham— Painter of the Missouri Frontier

Paul Herndon



RAFTSMEN PLAYING CARDS.
The downstream voyage was a time for relaxation as the boat floated with the current.

As Catlin painted Indians—
As Miller painted Mountain Men—

George Caleb Bingham's pictures portray the life of the settler on the Missouri frontier.

Today they provide us with a unique and dramatic record of this facet of the development of the West.

George Caleb Bingham was born on March 29, 1811 in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. He was the son of Henry V. Bingham and Mary Amend, a woman who was exceptionally well educated for her time. It was to her that Bingham was indebted for his own education.

When Bingham was eight years old, financial losses forced the

family to move to the frontier town of Franklin, Missouri. This town was located 200 miles up-river from St. Louis, and by the time the Bingham family arrived, it was the most important town along that stretch of the river. Even then it was far from primitive.

In Franklin, the Bingham family settled down to regain their fortune. Apparently they were well received. Henry Bingham opened a tavern and bought 160 acres of land in the Arrow Rock township. A few years later he was the county Judge. But the promising start had a setback in 1823 when Henry died. Mary Amend Bingham tried to assume the family responsibilities. She opened a school for girls and tried to oper-

ate the tavern, but for the second time bad judgments caused the loss of family fortune. Mary Bingham moved the family to a farm near Arrow Rock. There she reopened her school and George was apprenticed to Jess Green, a local minister and cabinetmaker.

When the church transferred Green to another district, George moved to Franklin to work for another cabinetmaker named Justinian Williams. In his spare time he read all the books on art technique that were available and poured over prints of the paintings of Thomas Sully.

When George was 19 he quit his job and set out for St. Louis to study art. The trip was a near disaster. Before he got to St. Louis,

he came down with the measles and almost died.

As soon as he was able to travel, Bingham returned to Arrow Rock and spent several months regaining his strength. The measles had caused him to lose his hair, and thereafter he always wore a wig. More important, his illness had wrecked his plans to study art, but it had not diminished his determination to become an artist.

He began his professional career as an artist when he opened a portrait studio in Franklin. Using house paints and some well-worn brushes left behind by an itinerant artist, he accepted commissions to paint portraits on approval.

When he was able to please his subject, he got \$20 for a portrait, frame included. He quickly improved and was soon in great demand as a portrait painter. Between 1830 and 1838 Bingham spent his time as an itinerant portrait painter. He would open a studio in a new town, stay as long as business was good and then move to another location. He opened a studio in St. Louis in 1835 and received favorable notice in the *St. Louis Bulletin*.

Throughout the period, he had as much business as he was able to handle, but he also found time for romance. In 1836 he left St. Louis to return to Franklin where he married Sarah Elizabeth Hutchins.

As we read the accounts of this phase of Bingham's life, we begin to suspect that, despite the fact that he had become highly successful as a portrait painter, he was frustrated by the limits of this form of art. Like most artists of his day, he had given much of his time and talent to portraits because it was the one form of painting the artist could depend on to make money.

The camera was still in the future, and once a family had the means, they hurried to the local portrait painter to have him paint likenesses of as many members of the family as they could afford.

Bingham's discontent may have been first expressed in a letter he wrote to Sarah Elizabeth shortly

before they were married.

"Though I generally succeed in pleasing others," he wrote, "it is seldom I can please myself."

His search for new horizons led him to make a three-month visit to Philadelphia in 1838, and he may have made a visit to New York during this time. Many students of Bingham's life and work believe that he became interested in genre art—a style of painting concerned with depicting scenes and subjects from everyday life—while he was in Philadelphia.

After he returned to Arrow Rock he made his first venture into genre painting when he did a picture he called "Western Boatmen Ashore." The picture was not well received. Discouraged, and probably believing that genre art was beyond his talent, he continued to paint portraits for several more years.

Nevertheless, a desire to try more genre art pulled at him. He did some sketches of frontier life and in 1840 started to do sketches of political scenes when he attended a convention of the Whig party.

Still reluctant to give up the security offered by portrait painting, he was, perhaps without being fully aware of it, starting to absorb the color and flavor of scenes of the Missouri frontier.

For success in genre art, the artist needs a special kind of eye. For his pictures to have value, he must see uniqueness in the ordinary and significance in the mundane scenes of daily life. Without becoming maudlin or clownish, he must recognize the pathos as well as the humor of his surroundings. He seeks and when he succeeds, he captures an age or a region and makes it live forever.

Sometime in the mid-1800's Bingham took the plunge into genre art. This time he was successful and it is this phase of his career that commands our attention for it transformed an accomplished craftsman into an important American artist.

Art historians have divided Bingham's art according to subject matter. The divisions are: the River Series, the Political Series, the Landscapes, and the Historic

and Patriotic Series. The divisions are convenient, and we shall use them here.

The River Series

The Missouri River was the dominant feature of the Missouri Frontier. It was the major avenue of commerce and trade across the State. By the time the Bingham family arrived in the area, the steamboat was a fact of life, and the most active area in any river town was the waterfront. But the steamboat had not yet replaced the keelboats, rafts, pirogues, and scows that dominated the river for years.

The river environment gave rise to a special breed of men. They devoted their lives to the river and learned all of its moods. Sandbars and sawyers, channels and currents were all charted in the mind, and their boats were the workhorses of their trade—designed to do the job at hand.

Work was hard. Boats had to be loaded and unloaded, and sometimes they had to be cordelled upstream. But the downstream voyage was a time for relaxation as the boat floated with the current. On the downstream trip the boatmen took their ease, resting, playing cards, or dancing to the fiddle or the banjo.

Bingham saw river life through the eyes of a romantic, and his portrayal of the boatman's life is idyllic. Steamboats rarely appear in his pictures. Perhaps he saw them as mechanical intrusions into the tranquility of the Missouri—or perhaps he considered them a fad that would pass with time. At any rate, Bingham's river boats are the barges, pirogues and keelboats of an earlier day.

His boatmen are rarely caught working. One would believe that life on the river was one of relaxation and play. Yet he captures an essence.

Political Series

In 1851, Bingham started a painting which he called the "County Election". It marked the beginning of the Political Series of his career. The pictures that make up this series differ from the River Series, not only in subject matter, but also in compo-

sition. Where the river pictures show small groupings of people, the Political Series often portray masses. Here we see the earnest-faced politician pleading for his cause. Often he is surrounded by local dignitaries, who are puffed with their self-importance. The faces of the crowd gathered about the speaker mirror rapt attention, skepticism, boredom and disinterest. With the exception of

activity as a skilled observer.
The Landscapes

There is really nothing very outstanding about Bingham's landscapes. In this writer's opinion, they are generally inferior in quality to those paintings done for the River and Political Series. An exception should be made for "Cottage Scenery". However, some critics doubt that Bingham painted this picture.

private in the Irish Company of Van Horn's Battalion of the United States Volunteer Reserve Corps. Shortly after he joined the Company, he was elected its Captain. The battalion was assigned to keeping order in Kansas City. Eventually he resigned these duties to accept appointment as Treasurer of the State of Missouri.

Although Bingham's support of the Union was total, it did not

JOLLY FLAT-BOATMEN IN PORT. Bingham's boatmen are rarely caught working, yet he captures the essence.



costuming, Bingham's people could be a typical audience of modern-day America.

Bingham had a firsthand knowledge of, and a frontiersman's respect for the political process. He had been a candidate for political office, and had experienced both success and failure in taking his cause to the people. He was a man who held deep convictions about the issues that affected his State and community. His paintings flow naturally from his involvement. Yet he also seems to have had a talent to disassociate himself from the scene—to be able to stand apart and view the

The Historical and Patriotic Series

It was Bingham's misfortune to live through the period of the Civil War. Being a man who held strong political views, he was deeply distressed as the strife over slavery and States' rights built up during the 1850's. His painting "The Emigration of Daniel Boone" in 1851 and his "Washington Crossing the Delaware," which he started in 1856, may have been attempts to remind all Americans of their common origins.

His support of the Union was passionate. When war finally broke out, he volunteered as a

keep him from being critical of what he considered Union excesses in the prosecution of the war. On August 25, 1863, the Union General Thomas Ewing issued his infamous Order No. 11, calling for the evacuation of all settlers from a large section of western Missouri and the destruction of all property within the area. The Order imposed great hardship on many who were loyal to the Union as well as on some who were not.

Bingham pleaded with General Ewing to rescind the Order, and when the plea was refused, he painted the picture "Order No.

11" which he used in an attempt to bring down public censure on General Ewing.

During that period immediately preceding the outbreak of war, Bingham had been bitter in his renunciation of southern marauders. But after the war broke out he was equally bitter in his renunciation of northern marauders. After the war, he opposed the radical policies of reconstruction that were imposed on the South.

In his efforts to mix art and propaganda, it was the art that suffered. His passions betrayed his artistic judgment. In "Order No. 11", the treatment of the subject matter is melodramatic and the quality of execution is inferior to his better works. In later years he spent a great deal of time in defending the painting from attack by more radical Union supporters.

Ironically, Bingham's position on the conduct of the war and on the policies of reconstruction won wide support in the South. In 1878 he was asked to choose a design for the Robert E. Lee Monument Association of the State of Virginia and was received as something of a hero in Richmond.

For George Caleb Bingham, art and life were closely interwoven. He refused the romantic mold of a starving recluse painting masterpieces in an attic. He was an active participant in the day-to-day life of his State and community—liked and respected by those around him. Although never rich, his art adequately supported him and his family.

He suffered his share of tragedy, but also enjoyed honor and success. His first wife, Sarah Elizabeth, died after a mere twelve years of marriage. His second wife, Eliza K. Thomas was committed to an asylum for the insane in 1876 and died a year later. Shortly after that, mental disturbance caused one of his sons to turn against him. This alienation caused Bingham great distress.

Yet, showing the indomitable spirit of the pioneer, he married for the third time to Martha Liv-

ingston Lykins who survived him.

He was both elected and appointed to political office, and was a professor of art at the University of Missouri at the time of his death.

If the record is complete, Bingham did his best work without formal training. If by "primitive" we mean an artist who is self-taught, then Bingham was a primitive, but if the term is used to describe someone whose work shows an amateurish quality, he was far from primitive. In fact, his pictures show such consummate skill in composition and color, many critics have insisted that he must have had a teacher. In support of this theory, many point to the time he spent in Philadelphia and speculate that he must have enrolled in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts during the three months he spent in the city. However, in the preparation of his definitive work on the life of Bingham and his art, Albert Christ-Janer found no evidence that Bingham ever enrolled in that Academy.

We know that he did have opportunity to study the works of other artists including the European masters. While in Philadelphia, he saw the genre painting of prominent American artists. In many ways, his mind was like a sponge, quickly absorbing ideas to which he was exposed.

Critics agree that the quality of Bingham's work deteriorated after 1856. That year he made a trip to Europe and may have studied art in Dusseldorf, Germany. If so, the lessons failed to improve his talent. After returning from Europe he produced nothing of quality. No one seems to know for certain what happened, but several reasons suggest themselves. Some feel that in his efforts to imitate the European style of painting, he compromised his own native talent. But it also seems certain that the coming of the Civil War, and his involvement in it, diverted his energies into other fields. What seems more explicit, he tried to use his talent to promote his political and moral views. In so doing he turned from art to propaganda.

In regard to this change in the quality of his work, Christ-Janer quotes C.B. Rollins, a student of Bingham's life and art as saying,

"An artist may come to the end of a chapter of his life; he is lured by new interests; he tries to explore other modes. About 1856, Bingham searched for new scenes; he wanted to expand his horizons. He set sail and explored other worlds. I think he got lost."

Yet Bingham's best work was too good to be obscured by a bad ending. He opened a window on a facet of the American experience that no one else has shown. The best assessment of Bingham as an artist was made by a fellow artist and fellow Missourian, Thomas Hart Benton. That assessment, quoted by Christ-Janer, is an eloquent commentary on the man and on art in general. Benton wrote:

"Bingham lived in a day when it was the picture rather than the way it was made which occupied the amateur's attention. No elaborate pseudo-technical verbiage was erected between his picture and his audience. If he painted a tree, it was a tree and not a sign pointing to some obscure world of special values which this cult or that was trying to prove its superior sensibilities. Painting was plainer and more matter of fact in Bingham's day. There were no painters' painters, nor was one supposed to need some special training or some occult capacity to determine whether or not one liked an artist's work. A picture was not directed to coteries of precious experts but to ordinary people who might buy it and put it in their homes. This is healthy and as it should be and, though Bingham lived close to the wilderness and faced hard times now and then, he had a public and was a successful artist. He painted for a living world and painted what that world could understand—its own life."

Paul Herndon is a Public Information Specialist in the Office of Public Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Washington, D. C.

Public Land Sales

Tracts of public land are sold by the State Offices listed on this page. Sales are held only when land use planning indicates that the public interest will be better served by disposal of the tract in question. In light of the time involved in preparing, printing, and distributing this publication, it is impossible to report on all sales far enough in advance to give most

readers an opportunity to participate. However, notices of sale will be published in the Federal Register and in local newspapers serving the community where the land being offered is located. These notices will appear at least 60 days before the sale. Currently, the only States authorized to conduct auction sales are Nevada and Wyoming.

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